

NEWHAVEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

Town and Port of Newhaven,

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31ST, 1905.

T. PONSFORD CANN, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

To the Members of the Newhaven Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present you my Fifth Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

The health of the Town has continued to be good and the death rate is again below the average for the last ten years.

I would especially mention the continuous and rapid manner in which the birth rate is falling ; this is best seen by reference to Table I. attached.

I am pleased to inform you that owing to the tact and energy of your new Inspector a very large number of sanitary improvements have been effected, and others which have been for a long time under consideration are now being taken in hand.

In nearly every case where disinfection after infectious disease was needed, it has been carried out gratuitously by the Inspector, with the pleasing result that there have been no cases of secondary infection.

The forms required by the Local Government Board and the Home Office are appended, and I think from a statistical point of view are very satisfactory.

My thanks are due to the Members of the Council for the consideration they have always shown me, and to their Officers who have always given me every assistance in my work.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. PONSFORD CANN,

Medical Officer of Health.

March, 1906.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Soil.—Chalk, brick earth or clay.

Height with relation to Sea-level.—From 200 feet above to six feet below high water level.

Area.—1,100 acres.

Population.—Estimated to the middle of 1905—6,800.

Water Supply.—From the Newhaven and Seaford Water Company, derived from a well sunk into the chalk at Poverty Bottom, about a mile east of the town.

House Accommodation.—One new house has been erected during the year. The supervision of the construction of new houses, with their drainage is under the Surveyor.

Two complaints as to over crowding have been received and investigated; of which the first was found to be groundless, and the second was at once remedied. The condition of some of the old property in the town leaves much to be desired, but I have not felt justified in taking any action under The Housing of the Working Classes Acts.

The dirty condition of certain back yards owing to the keeping of chicken and to lack of proper dust bins has received the constant attention of the Inspector of Nuisances.

Sewerage.—Under the supervision of the Surveyor, the sewers are working in a satisfactory manner. The sewers on either side of the river discharge into culverts which are emptied into the river at its mouth on the ebb tide. From experiments with specially designed floats and also from chemical and bacteriological analyses I am satisfied that very little, if any, of the sewerage returns into the river on the flood tide. As a result of the local inquiry held at Lewes in October, 1904, under the Rivers Pollution Prevention Acts, the Local Government Board wrote to the County Council in January, 1905, that "The Board are not satisfied from the evidence adduced that enteric fever prevalence at Newhaven and Piddinghoe has been attributable to the pollution of the Ouse by the sewage of Lewes. The Board are, however, satisfied from their Inspector's report that a highly objectionable, and possibly dangerous, condition of the Ouse in the neighbourhood of Lewes is from time to time occasioned by the discharge into the river of the crude sewage of Lewes, at all states of the tide, and that such objectionable condition should so far as possible be put an end to. The Board are therefore addressing a communication to the Town Council of Lewes drawing attention to the unsatisfactory state of affairs brought to light by the inquiry, and urging them to take steps as early as possible to remedy the conditions referred to."

The Lewes Town Council are, I believe, now considering a scheme for dealing with their sewage in a more satisfactory manner.

Refuse Disposal is carried out by the Council's men under the supervision of the Surveyor. The refuse is taken to a brickfield outside the district for use in brickmaking. There have been no complaints.

Premises under special supervision.—Dairies and milkshops have been frequently inspected. There are two cow-sheds in the district, the condition of which is not entirely satisfactory. I have already pointed out to the Sanitary Committee the desirability of adopting bye-laws, and the matter is now under consideration.

There is one lodging-house which is kept in a most satisfactory manner.

There are four slaughter-houses in the town concerning some of which complaints are from time to time received, chiefly as to the removal of offal, which under your bye-laws should be removed within twenty-four hours. They are not registered.

There are no offensive trades carried on in the district.

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.—The Medical Officer of Health is required to report on the administration of this Act in so far as it concerns his department, and forward a copy to the Secretary of State.

A register of the workshops in the district is kept by the Council, and there are none in which dangerous or offensive trades are carried on.

The various premises have been frequently inspected and no serious nuisance has been discovered.

There are seven retail bake-houses in one of which mechanical power is used; they are inspected once a month, one was found in a dirty condition, but was cleansed satisfactorily on a notice being served.

There are no underground bake-houses.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Population.—At the census of 1901 the population was 6,136 persons of all ages, I now estimate it to be 6,800. The natural increase (*i.e.*, the excess of the number of births over deaths) for the year was exactly 100.

Birth Rate.—The number of births registered was 179, of which 87 were males and 92 females, giving a birth rate of 26·32. This is again the lowest for the last ten years, being 4·54 below the average.

Death Rate.—The total number of deaths registered was 79, giving a gross death rate of 11·61 comparing very favourably with the average for the last ten years which is 14·28. Ten of the deaths were those of non-residents who died in the Union Infirmary, when these are deducted from the total we have a nett death rate of 10·14.

Infant Mortality.—There were only 12 deaths of infants under one year of age, which gives a mortality rate of 67 for every thousand born. This is exceptionally low, and is accounted for by the complete absence of deaths from infantile diarrhoea and whooping cough.

Senile Mortality.—Of those who died during the year, 20 had reached the age of 65, which is equivalent to 28·98 % of the total deaths.

Zymotic Death Rate.—This expresses the number of deaths per thousand of population from the principal infectious diseases, viz:—Smallpox, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, the Fevers (Typhus, Typhoid and Puerperal), and Diarrhoea. During the year there were four deaths from these diseases, viz:—Diphtheria one, Typhoid Fever one, and Diarrhoea two. There was one death from Scarlet Fever at the Workhouse, but the child being a non-resident the case has not been included in these statistics. The zymotic death rate is therefore only 0·58.

Tubercular Diseases.—There were 10 deaths from this cause, nine of which were from lung disease, equal to a Phthisis death rate of 1·32.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

Thirty-one cases of infectious diseases were notified as follows:—Scarlet Fever 16, Erysipelas seven, Diphtheria five, Typhoid Fever two, Puerperal Fever one.

Scarlet Fever.—Sixteen cases notified. There were really two mild outbreaks, the first in the spring consisting of nine cases, commenced in Church Road, spreading to the neighbouring streets; the second in November and December probably imported from Piddinghoe. There were seven cases of which four were in Meeching Rise, all proved to be contact cases.

Two cases were removed to the Sanatorium, and one in the Workhouse was fatal.

Diphtheria.—Five cases notified. The cases occurred irregularly as follows:—February 8th in Meeching Road, March 6th, Chapel Street, March 14th, Fort Road, August 29th, Harper's Road, and November 7th, Meeching Road.

Two cases were removed to the Sanatorium, one of which was fatal, the child dying suddenly shortly after admission.

Typhoid Fever.—Two cases notified. The first was a resident who while on a visit to Chester fell ill and was advised to return home, which he did, on arrival he was found to be suffering from Typhoid Fever.

The second was that of a child who was taken ill a few days after eating a quantity of winkles taken from the river. The case ended fatally.

Erysipelas.—This disease was notified six times.

Puerperal Fever.—With the Midwives Act now in force we shall, I believe, hear very much less of this disease. All midwives are registered and regularly inspected by a lady fully qualified in medicine and surgery; they are instructed by her in methods of cleanliness, and the use of a thermometer. Should any untoward symptoms appear in a patient either during labour or in the lying in period, the midwife in attendance is bound to send for a medical practitioner, thus any complication can be attended to as soon as it arises. The Local Supervising Authority must be notified of every such case in order that it may be investigated should neglect or incompetence on the midwives' part be suspected.

There was one case of Puerperal Fever notified during the year, it is however, doubtful how far this was a correct diagnosis. The patient being found subsequently to be suffering from Tuberculosis which was probably the cause of the symptoms.

German Measles was very prevalent during the first week in April, and in order to check the spread of the disease I advised the closure of the Council's Schools which was done on the following dates: Infants' School, April 5th, Boys' and Girls' School, April 10th, after mid-day, Railway Road Schools, April 11th. The schools all re-opened after the Easter holidays, which commenced on April 20th. The epidemic soon abated and the school registers showed comparatively few absentees from this disease on re-opening.

Influenza was again prevalent towards the end of the year; one death from this cause being certified.

The following table shows the number of notifications from each notifiable disease for the last ten years:—

Year.	1905.	1904.	1903.	1902.	1901.	1900.	1899.	1898.	1897.	1896.
Total Notifications ...	31	29	31	23	47	53	48	27	14	31
Typhoid Fever ...	2	2	3	9	22	6	8	6	9	13
Diphtheria ...	5	7	5	1	4	3	16	2	0	3
Scarlet Fever ...	16	10	13	2	12	33	2	4	0	9
Erysipelas ...	7	7	9	10	9	10	21	15	5	6
Puerperal Fever ...	1	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Smallpox ...	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Disinfection.—It has been found that householders seldom if ever carry out this most important duty, after the recovery of a patient from infectious disease, in an efficient manner. In order to as far as possible prevent secondary infection the Inspector has carried out the disinfection in nearly every case, although not one of his duties. The method employed lately has been by compressed sulphur-dioxide gas; the walls of the room being subsequently stripped and repapered, and the ceiling whitewashed. In future the formalin spray provided for the new Isolation Hospital will be available. The new steam disinfector will soon be ready for disinfecting bedding, carpets, clothes, and other similar articles.

THE NEW SANATORIUM.

After waiting for a number of years the town will shortly possess an up-to-date Sanatorium. The contractor commenced work early in the year and the building will, I hope, be ready for use if required within a few weeks.

The old building on the hill above the Workhouse passed out of the Council's hands on December 25th, it has served its purpose in a way but was a most unsatisfactory make-shift. The new buildings are built on a site three acres in extent adjoining the south boundary of the cemetery, the land costing £900.

The contract for the building is being carried out by Mr. C. Cook, of Newhaven, to cost £5,100, this includes a brougham ambulance by Wilson & Stockwall, costing £100, and all fittings other than actual furniture.

The site is for the most part on solid chalk subsoil sloping from south-west downwards to north-east in which part there is a gravel subsoil.

The buildings consist of administration, discharge, laundry and two ward blocks. They are built with concrete floors and wood blocks; the walls are hollow with Callender's Bitumen damp-proof courses; the roofs are boarded, felted and tiled.

The Administration Block consists on the ground floor of a kitchen, scullery, storeroom, Nurses' and Medical Officer's rooms; on the upper floor there are four bedrooms, bath and storerooms; there is also a w.c. on each floor.

Hot and cold water is laid on to both floors, the hot water pipes being carried under the shelves in the storeroom in order to keep the linen aired.

The Discharge Block consists of three small rooms, consisting of undressing, bathing and dressing rooms. The rooms are warmed and the bath water heated by a saddle boiler behind the fireplace in the dressing room. There is a twenty-gallon cylinder for the hot water and it is found that it takes half-an-hour to heat sufficient water for each bath.

The Laundry Block contains washing and ironing rooms, disinfecting rooms, a coach-house for the ambulance, and a mortuary.

There are two disinfecting rooms, the first containing a boiler and half the disinfecter which is built into the wall dividing it from the other rooms. Infected articles will be received into the first room placed into the disinfecter and when the disinfection is complete will be removed from the other end of the machine in the second room. The disinfecter is a cylindrical medium pressure machine measuring 3-ft. 6-in. by 7-ft. made by Manlove & Alliott, who also supplied the laundry appliances, consisting of steam heated boilers, and steam drying closets.

The Ward Blocks face south-east by east, each containing two wards with a lavatory and w.c. attached, there is a Nurses' duty room between them and bath and storeroom. The wards are heated by Doulton's ventilating stoves, and also by Kite's low pressure hot water radiators; the ventilation is by Kite's exhaust and inlet ventilators, the inlets being placed behind each radiator a few inches above floor-level and others in the wall over the head of each bed six feet from the floor, the exhaust is placed in the centre of the ceiling. The windows and doors all have fanlights above them to open, and one window on each side of the ward is made to open wide. In the larger block there are four beds in each ward and in the smaller two, thus there will be twelve beds available.

Each block has its own separate drain conveying sewage to a septic tank (Adam's patent), consisting of a settling tank, collecting tank, and two filter beds of coke breeze. The effluent will be disposed of by subsoil irrigation by discharging it through a series of perforated pipes laid on a gravel soil and covered with coke breeze to a depth of a foot.

The furnishing will probably cost about £200.

The Council have entered into an agreement with the County Council whereby the latter, provided the Sanatorium fulfils certain requirements, contribute a sum of £1,500 towards the initial cost and £50 yearly for maintenance; one stipulation being that four beds be held at the disposal of any local authority in the county area which has already provided adequate hospital accommodation but which owing to an epidemic requires more; unless eight beds are already occupied by cases from our own district.

EXTRACTS FROM THE INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Your Inspector, Mr. Akhurst, succeeded Mr. Quaife on March 25th, 1905, and commenced work at once by a systematic rigorous inspection of the district. He found however that owing to the very large number of minor nuisances requiring his attention, that he must necessarily be less exacting if he were to complete his inspection by the end of the year, he has however made a detailed examination of the premises in every street with the following exceptions:—Fort Road, Church Road, Newfield Road, Lawes' Avenue, Evelyn Avenue, Harpers Road and High Street, of which he has made a cursory inspection. Of the nuisances discovered and abated I would mention the following:—

Defective and deficient dust bins	...	50	(43 new bins supplied, 7 being dealt with).
Drainage defects	...	96	
W.C. defects	...	69	
W.C.'s with no flushing tanks	...	58	(of these one has been supplied, 21 are being dealt with, 36 remaining).
Filth accumulations	...	4	
House and yard defects	...	25	
Barbed wire removed	...	2	
Dirty Houses	...	2	
Over crowding complaints	...	2	
Slaughter-houses (offal nuisances)	...	3	
Bakehouse dirty	...	1	
Smoke nuisance	...	1	

Three workman's closets on the quay were found to be in a very delapidated and foul condition; of these two have been re-constructed and the third is being attended to.

TABLE SHOWING STATISTICS FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS.

YEARS	1905.	1904.	1903.	1902.	1901.	1900.	1899.	1898.	1897.	1896.
<i>Population</i> , estimated to the middle of the Year - - - - -	6800	6680	6432	6284	6136	5988	5839	5691	5543	5394
<i>Birth Rate</i> per 1,000 of the Population -	26'32	27'09	28'29	30'23	34'40	31'35	32'75	31'07	30'00	30'94
<i>Death Rate</i> of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 births - - - -	67'03	154'69	76'92	100'00	113'74	86'48	205'26	103'44	139'33	103'66
<i>Total Death Rate</i> per 1,000 of Population	11'61	12'72	10'88	11'30	14'24	14'74	18'10	11'96	16'54	17'75
<i>Nett General Death Rate</i> per 1,000 living	10'14	11'52	9'63	10'34	13'27	14'00	15'00	9'46	14'18	15'84
<i>Zymotic Death Rate</i> per 1,000 - -	'58	1'94	'62	'47	2'26	1'28	2'15	'82	'60	2'60
<i>Death Rate from Phthisis</i> per 1,000 -	1'32	1'34	'77	'95	1'14	'85	'30	'65	1'00	'52
<i>Death Rate from Respiratory Diseases</i> per 1,000 - - - - -	3'52	2'54	2'64	2'54	2'70	1'28	1'84	'82	2'60	1'73
<i>Senile Mortality</i> , deaths at ages 65 and over as per centage of Total Deaths -	28'98	18'18	20'75	22'53	25'0	16'8	23'8	26'2	25'2	23'8

1905.

PORT SANITARY REPORT.

To the Members of the Newhaven Port Sanitary Authority.

GENTLEMEN,

I am pleased to report that the health of the crews of ships in the harbour has again been very good.

There has been only one case of infectious disease notified during the year of a man suffering from Erysipelas. The case was a mild one and the man was almost well when the ship left.

The ships in the port have been frequently and regularly visited and inspected. The Inspector visits the office of Lloyds' agent every morning, who kindly informs him what vessels have entered the port since the previous morning.

During the summer owing to the outbreak of Cholera in the Baltic Ports, all ships coming from the infected area were specially inspected, the masters questioned as to any sickness that had occurred during the voyage, and care was taken to make sure the water tanks were emptied, cleaned and replenished.

Very few sanitary defects or nuisances were discovered, and these were only of a minor kind, such as damp and dirty forecastles, or the need to clean out water tanks; in all cases the requirements of the Inspector were attended to.

There was only one death on a ship in the port, viz: the mate of the ship "Magnet," from Abo in Finland, was found dead in his cabin. An inquest was held and the verdict was "death from natural causes," the actual cause being disease of the heart.

The main passenger traffic of the port, that between Newhaven and Dieppe, continues to increase, particulars of which for the last five years are given below:—

YEAR.	NEWHAVEN TO DIEPPE.		DIEPPE TO NEWHAVEN.	
	Voyages.	Passengers.	Voyages.	Passengers.
1901	745	86,386	745	95,650
1902	738	93,017	737	101,677
1903	741	97,652	742	104,435
1904	744	103,037	744	110,461
1905	748	105,376	747	111,226

In connection with the passenger traffic of the port, I have been appointed Medical Inspector under the Aliens Act which commenced on January the first, under this Act all alien steerage passengers are subjected to a strict medical examination, and thus a great check will be placed on the importation of infectious diseases into the country.

Although the total number of ships entering and clearing the port is still decreasing, the total tonnage is considerably on the increase, this is due to the gradual disappearance of sailing ships and the substitution of larger steamers.

Return showing the number and tonnage of steam and sailing vessels entered and cleared at the port of Newhaven during the year 1905 :—

		STEAM VESSELS.		SAILING VESSELS.		TOTAL VESSELS.	
		No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
I.—FOREIGN TRADE.							
Entered	...	1,714	394,582	66	10,306	1,780	404,888
Cleared	...	1,686	384,835	42	7,577	1,728	392,412
II.—COASTING TRADE.							
Entered	...	514	126,551	83	8,553	597	126,634
Cleared	...	642	146,820	104	10,417	746	157,237

My best thanks are due to Captain Morris, Marine Superintendent, and Mr. Cahill, Collector of Customs, for their invariable kindness and assistance given me in the performance of my duties.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

T. PONSFORD CANN,

Medical Officer of Health.

MARCH, 1906.

